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THE THEOSOPHICAL FORUM

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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA.

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E. T. HARGROVE, President.

Each member is invited to send questions, answers to questions, opinions, and notes upon Theosophical subjects. When necessary, the various communications will be condensed by the editor. Members should be careful to write distinctly and on one side of the paper only.

In sending questions, or answers to questions, whenever an assertion is made that such and such is a doctrine, or that "it is said in Theosophical literature," and the like, the name of author, article, volume, and page referred to must be given.

All communications should be addressed to **The Editor, Theosophical Forum, 144 Madison Avenue, New York City.**

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QUESTION 87.

I have heard it said that the French Revolution destroyed our Society in the last century. Was this really the fact?

John M. Pryse.—The statement referred to was made at the Convention in San Francisco, and was published in the *Pacific Theosophist* for May, 1894: "The Theosophical Society was founded in the last century. * * * But the revolution of 1793 came and swept all away. And that is one reason why we now have such a terrible Karma to work out."

To many T. S. members this statement might seem plausible at first glance, but a little analysis will show how erroneous it is. The historical fact that the Society had ended in failure and disruption *before* 1793, the beginning of the revolution, is alone sufficient to annul the statement above-quoted.

But to look at the logic of it: A political disturbance is said to have put out of existence an occult body. The cause for failure is thus laid to something quite apart from the Society; nevertheless while reëstablishing the Society, or a similar one, at the present time there is a terrible Karma to be met with because of this thing *not* done by members in the last century! Strange law of cause and effect that punishes severely a Society at the present time for what a rabble quite apart from it did a century ago.

Let us not deceive ourselves. The only thing that destroyed all attempts in past centuries and that nearly disrupted the present move-

ment was—disloyalty among the members—disloyalty to their ideals and true leaders. The members previous to the year 1793 had repudiated their leaders and links with the Lodge, causing them to "fall into disrepute." Was not the same done to a large extent in 1884, when H. P. B. was the "link," and again in 1894, with W. Q. J. as our Lodge-connection? In these two crises, unlike in past centuries, the movement was saved by a number remaining staunch and loyal.

A Theosophical Society is at its core an esoteric institution. That means that it has an astral or spiritual existence. If it became that only in pretence, it were well that a French or other revolution placed it out of existence ere it developed into a vampire of priestcraft or magic other than white. But so long as it is esoterically alive, it has an inner existence and a living tie (a magnetic current) connecting it with the Great Lodge. Thus it is beyond, high above the reach of revolutionists—it exists upon a plane which weapons, fagots and sarcasm can never reach. If the members of the last century had held firm to their ideals and links with the Lodge they could have withstood not only the howling mob of France, but the combined powers of the world. Did not the Master at the time of the Coulomb accusations write to H. P. B.: "So long as there are three men worthy of our Lord's blessing in the Theosophical Society it can never be destroyed." And H. P. B.'s last message was: "Keep the link unbroken! Do not let my last incarnation be a failure."

All of the above has a bearing in the future, otherwise it would not have been written. Will our present members learn and profit from the sad experience of the past? We are fortunate in now having another link with the Masters. If in the future accusations by disaffected members be made, evil rumors and psychical currents of suspicion be circulated, how many of our members will pay heed to them and desert their posts of duty?

The constitution and genius of the T. S. permits a member to believe as he chooses; and to those who do not accept the idea of Masters the above remarks can be of but little purport. They are addressed only to those who believe in such occult matters.

J. Hiram.—A hint as to what happened to the Theosophical movement of the last century is, I think, to be found in the "Word of Warning" which appeared in January *Theosophy* ". . . It is the automatic operation of this law that made it such a very serious thing for the T. S. to be started at all, as it was by no means certain that the forces for good in the world in this time of 'Kali-Yug' would be powerful enough to counteract the evil that would necessarily be roused by the foundation of the T. S. There was grave danger that the society might run away from its founders and get beyond their control."

In other words what threatened the movement in this century is what actually happened to it in the last. For the reform which was undertaken in France was, as I understand it, not only begun under the auspices of the Theosophical movement of the time, but personally directed by the leaders of that movement, until the time that the "grave danger" threatening our society became the sad fate which engulfed last century's. And so not only the society itself went to pieces but its child, which, had the society succeeded, would have been a splendid reform, became instead a terrible revolution, a Frankenstein's monster, which destroyed almost the very traces of that which gave it birth.

H. P. B. somewhere says that the great benefactors and saviours of mankind and the great black magicians are often born in the same family at the same time. Possibly this was the case in the last century, or, as Mr. Neresheimer says, "If a force for good is liberated, it gives the powers of darkness the opportunity to expend an equal amount of energy in the opposite direction," and, the good failing to keep alive and act, the evil would naturally have a free course and sweep everything before it.

Instead of the "Revolution's destroying the society," I should rather say that the failure of the society (the failure, not of its leaders but of its members) was, if not the direct cause of the "Revolution," at least the downfall of that which alone could have coped with it, and either have greatly softened its character or altogether changed its course.

Joseph H. Fussell.—I do not think that the French Revolution destroyed the then existing Theosophical Society. It has been several times said that a special effort is made by the Masters to help humanity during the last quarter of every century. It is easy to trace the great forces for good which appear century after century but we cannot fail to notice also that the last quarter of each century is a time of crisis for humanity. What is the connection between the efforts of the Masters and these crises? The crisis which culminated in the French Revolution was inevitable, it was the result of innumerable causes which had long been working in Europe. The crisis impending in the World to-day—in almost every country—is also inevitable, it has been inevitable for many years past.

It is my opinion that *part* of the work of the Theosophical movement last century was to prepare Europe for the impending crisis, to bring about a condition of brotherhood that would enable Europe to pass through the crisis *without* revolution. That France did not escape revolution is simply evidence that the idea of brotherhood was not strong enough to enable it to withstand the disruptive forces of that period. But the failure of the T. S. last century did not cause the French Revolution; indeed I believe that but for the efforts made by the T. S. and

its leaders the revolution would have been even more terrible than it was. What is the relation of the Theosophical Society to-day to the present and impending crisis? It is just the same as in last century. The nations of the world, the whole of humanity as well as each individual, will have to face this crisis. The great work of the T. S. is to spread and make practical the idea of Brotherhood. If this be done it will not necessarily avert the crisis, but it will enable humanity, in the measure of its realization of Brotherhood, to pass through the crisis, to arise from it free, strong, ennobled.

H. P. B. in the *Glossary* says of St. Germain that he was "the greatest Oriental Adept Europe has seen during the last centuries. But Europe knew him not. Perchance some may recognize him at the next *Terreur*, which will affect all Europe when it comes, and not one country alone." There may be causes which will bring revolution, whether at the end of this or next century we may not know, and the T. S. may be successful even in spite of revolution. If it is successful it will mean that Brotherhood will triumph over revolution. The failure of the T. S. in last century was due to no outside causes, but to the failure to realize that for which it was founded. And the success or failure of the T. S. in this century depends on the realization or otherwise of Brotherhood *by the members of the T. S.* and upon our loyalty to our Leaders. But we know it shall not fail, we have vowed it shall succeed.

QUESTION 88.

In the November FORUM, *in answer to one of the questions, on page 99, it is said that "we should neither love nor loathe any person, place, thing or condition." Now I can understand and accept the second part, but I should like to know how to overcome the love for certain individuals, friends or acquaintances, in whom their admirable qualities have drawn you to love them. Can one help it? And is it wrong when one has no selfish or personal desire in doing so?*

Edward B. Rambo.—From what plane of consciousness do we consider this question? If we are dwelling in the Supreme, if we are realizing we are the Supreme, there is neither love nor loathing, we "are as the angels in heaven;" we are however seldom thus exalted. We will find we are that Supreme manifesting in matter and therefore somewhere in the Qualities. We will also find we are not the Higher Ego but generally this lower personality and inextricably interwoven with other personalities when we consider our loves and hates. Without discussing what "love" or "hatred" may be, I think these conditions of mind, our attitude, towards persons, places, things and conditions are the perfect indication of our Karmic relations with those persons, etc., in past

lives, in the present and in a measure indicate what they shall be in future incarnations. We know they are from Karmic relations in the present life, why not in past lives and future ones? What Karmic ties may not the pure love of husband and wife, father, mother and children, brother and sister, companion, comrade, friend, stand for in the past and how great the combination that can be made! We are not brought together for but a moment in eternity. All Karmic obligations must be met and satisfied, then our loves are most sacred, indicating our highest duties and possibly our greatest indebtedness. Our hates as well may be blessings, if we realize that they bind us just as strongly and are to be transmuted into Compassion and a recognition of the same divinity in their cause.

"Can one help it?" No. "Is it wrong when one has no selfish or personal desire in doing so?" Not so long as we must live and act and strive for the regeneration of humanity, ourselves included.

Cavé.—It might perhaps have been better for the writer of the lines referred to in the question, to have given the answer, for I must take a radically different position, and make an emphatic protest against the doctrine enunciated which seems to me harmful in the extreme.

The man who succeeded in neither loving nor loathing "any person, place, thing, or condition," would have killed in himself the very forces by whose help alone he could hope to succeed on any path save of black magic. The loathing for sin and evil, softened by profound compassion for the sinner, is a feeling essential to progress; and the love which impels to absolute self-forgetfulness, and constant desire for the happiness and elevation of all about us, individually and collectively, is the highest impelling force we have—the essence of which is the Highest, Itself.

Impersonality is not the cold abstraction so many take it for,—and acting on, numb the very faculties most needed for their inner and outer growth and work. No more fatal mistake could be made. They have sadly mis-read their *Light on the Path* and *Voice of the Silence.* Utterly forgetful of self and all personal advancement, careless of results, we must be filled with an intense desire that good should be accomplished. From love of the home circle the advancing occultist broadens into love of the whole world; from a loathing of sin and evil in his own heart, he learns to truly loath it without, and to give his life to relieving others from its thraldom.

All loving, unselfish thought expended, returns as inspiration,—inspiration to higher and better work, to a larger devotion, so that our "strong desire will strike like Vulcan upon other hearts in the world." Oh! if we could only understand the need there is to-day for this forceful outgoing and outgiving in the world.

Allen Griffiths.—It is human nature to love those who love us, or whose "admirable qualities have drawn us to them." It is also natural to dislike and avoid those who are disagreeable. When analyzed, both the like and dislike are determined to be rooted in a subtle form of selfishness. The former class affords us happiness, the latter unhappiness—hence, our likes and dislikes, which are a pure play of personality, and have nothing to do with the soul itself. Like the sun which shines alike upon the just and the unjust, the soul is Brother to all that lives, and realizes that all souls in all beings are, like itself, rays from the Central Sun, the Supreme. In this light, one will not think less of relatives and friends but think much of them, not alone because they afford happiness, but mostly because they are our other selves. This larger conception will gradually lead us not only not to hate or loathe any one, but will cause the true relation of soul to soul to manifest itself in our intercourse with all men. Thus, does it not become clear that we should not love friends less, but love from the higher motive; and also love all others more, from the same motive? I have somewhere read this: "Cherish kindly feelings toward all, even toward those disliked by you. Kindly Feelings are kindled by the help from within the Heart, which is obtained there when THAT is sought and consulted." Will not this attitude inspire and cause to develop the same "admirable qualities" in all whom we contact? Ordinary likes and dislikes, emotions and feelings, are of the lower mind and from the head; Kindly Feelings which lead to "forgive your enemies" even "70 times 7," belong to the higher Triad and proceed from the Heart, which is the seat of the spiritual consciousness. The fact that a given thing is "human nature," is no reason it should be left so. Human nature is lower manasic and of the earth, earthy. While the home of the Triad is upon the heights toward which it ever aspires. Upon that impersonal plane "likes and dislikes," and all other lower manasic limitations, vanish before the "Light that has never shone on land or sea."

R. H.—The following quotations, from the *Occult World* (pages 151-153), being part of a letter from Master K. H., and from the *Voice of the Silence* (pages 28 and 52) seem to answer the above question.

"I hope that at least *you* will understand that we (or most of us) are far from being the heartless morally dried-up mummies some would fancy us to be. Mejnour is very well where he is—as an ideal character of a thrilling, in many respects truthful story. Yet, believe me, few of us would care to play the part in life of a desiccated pansy between the leaves of a volume of solemn poetry. * * *

"While the facilities of observation secured to some of us by our condition certainly give a greater breadth of view, a more pronounced

and impartial, a more widely spread humaneness—for answering Addison, we might justly maintain that *it is* 'the business of "magic" to humanize our natures with compassion'—for the whole mankind as all living beings, instead of concentrating and limiting our affections to one predilected race—yet few of us (except such as have attained the final negation of Moksha) can so far enfranchise ourselves from the influence of our earthly connection as to be unsusceptible in various degrees to the higher pleasures, emotions and interests of the common run of humanity. Of course the greater the progress toward deliverance, the less this will be the case, until, to crown all, human and purely individual personal feelings, blood-ties and friendship, patriotism and race predilection, will all give way to become blended into one universal feeling, the only true and holy, the only unselfish and eternal one—Love, an Immense Love for humanity as a whole. For it is humanity which is the great orphan, the only disinherited one upon earth, my friend. And it is the duty of every man who is capable of an unselfish impulse to do something, however little, for its welfare. * * *

"Yet I confess that I individually am not yet exempt from some of the terrestrial attachments. I am still attracted toward some men more than towards others, and philanthropy as preached by our great Patron—

'———— the Savior of the world,
The teacher of Nirvana and the Law'

has never killed in me either individual preferences of friendship, love for my next of kin, or the ardent feeling of patriotism for the country in which I was last materially individualized."

"If thou art told that to become Arhan thou hast to cease to love all beings—tell them they lie.

"If thou art told that to gain liberation thou hast to hate thy mother and disregard thy son; to disavow thy father and call him 'householder'; for man and beast all pity to renounce—tell them their tongue is false.

"Thus teach the Tirthikas, the unbelievers."

* * * * * *

"Thou shalt not separate thy being from BEING, and the rest, but merge the Ocean in the drop, the drop within the Ocean.

"So shalt thou be in full accord with all that lives; bear love to men as though they were thy brother-pupils, disciples of one Teacher, the sons of one sweet mother."

THEOSOPHICAL NEWS AND WORK.

THE BUFFALO LOTUS CIRCLE NO. 1 gave a Brotherhood supper and Christmas festival on Saturday evening, Dec. 26th. A large tree, beautifully decorated, stood at one end of the hall and the remainder was filled with long tables well supplied with good things, which quickly disappeared. The hall was crowded and many were turned away, but everyone present was well pleased and the children were more than happy with the gifts presented to them. During the supper soft music added to the effect and delighted all who were present.

LYNN BRANCH (Mass.) held in November three study meetings. Two public lectures were given: Nov. 9th by N. A. Bean, on "The Seven Principles of Man"; and 23d, by Mrs. M. H. Wade, of Reading, on "Make Way for Liberty."

THE SOMERVILLE T. S. holds regular class meetings on Friday evenings and occasional public lectures. Mrs. M. H. Wade gave an interesting lecture on Nov. 4th on "Make Way for Liberty." The musical features at meetings are being continued, and the members are working earnestly and harmoniously for the common cause.

MR. GEORGE D. AYERS, in pursuance of the propaganda by the *N. E. Committee for Theosophical Work*, has made a month's tour through the important cities of Maine. Starting Nov. 13th, he first visited Portland, where the meetings were large and enthusiastic. Good sized meetings were held at Lewiston, and a branch formed, a number of the members being old students of Theosophy.

In Brunswick the audiences were very small, but considerable work was done toward removing the prejudice that formerly existed against Theosophy. In Bath some good work was done, although a centre has not been established there as yet.

In Rockland a sufficient number of persons interested were gathered together to apply for a branch charter. Some of these had been students of Theosophy a long time, especially Brother Mather, who has been working for many years in Rockland almost alone. From Rockland Mr. Ayers visited Vinal Haven, an island a little way out from Rockland, where a centre for study and work was established under the charge of Brother McNamara of Rockland. In Bangor meetings were held in the rooms of the Young Men's Christian Association, and were large and very enthusiastic. A branch of eight members was formed and there are many others who will probably join soon.

In Belfast the meetings were well attended and great interest was shown. Under the leadership of Harvard W. Elwell, of Northport, a centre will probably soon be formed at Belfast. The Rev. Mr. Wells, the Universalist clergyman, in the vestry of whose church the lectures were given, is taking a great interest in Theosophy.

At Waterville Mr. Ayers was very signally aided by the efforts of the Rev. T. Jefferson Valentine, the Unitarian clergyman, who gave notice of the lectures in his church and urged his parishioners to attend them. Great interest was shown in Theosophy, and although a branch has not yet been formed, it is expected that the requisite number of signatures will soon be obtained. One of those who signed the application for a charter for the branch was Mr. Valentine, on whose urgent invitation Mr. Ayers remained in Waterville over Sunday and delivered the regular Sunday address from the pulpit of the Unitarian Church.

In Augusta the meetings were very largely attended and a centre has already been formed there. The State Librarian, Col. Carver, showed great interest in Theosophy and is one of those making up the centre. At all of these lectures, except in Brunswick, the lecturer was kept long after each talk answering the questions of eager inquirers.

The success of this tour was very largely due to the energetic and able efforts made by Miss Joyce Lee, secretary of the Portland T. S., who acted as advance agent for the lecturer and prepared notices for the newspapers, visited various persons before the lectures and enabled the lecture trip to be made in a much quicker time than would otherwise have been possible. Theosophy is certainly looking up in the State of Maine.

VARUNA T. S. (Bridgeport, Conn.) Our branch activities are steadily growing. Miss Emma Hall has formed an evening class for the study of Theosophy.

Mrs. Wilkins has met with good success with local papers. Three of the leading "Dailies" are taking articles given in series, which come out on stated days. Thirty-three have been printed this Fall and Winter and the demand continues.

In December, Mr. J. H. Fussell gave us a lecture on "Cycles." The week following our attendance was doubled. Vocal and instrumental music adds attractiveness to our weekly gatherings.

NEWARK T. S. (N. J.) commenced the year just past with six members, and though it has twice suffered by the resignation of members who were among the hardest workers, it seems now in better shape than ever before. The branch owes its existence to Mr. Patterson, who practically founded it and presided over its meetings until he left on the Crusade. Since then Mr. Gattell has taken his place and become a hard and faithful worker in our midst. The "Home Crusade Meeting" held here in December stirred things up considerably and the course of four lectures, now being given, is carrying the work further. Newark is a hard place to work in Theosophically, but the branch is progressing and slowly but surely putting its mark upon the town.

ARYAN T. S. A "watch night" meeting was held Dec. 31st. Coffee was served from 9 to 10.30 in the Headquarters room, and every one as he came in signed his name in the Visitor's Register after the following: "Those signing below are met together to watch the old year out and to greet the new year. They send out their greetings and good wishes to all Comrades throughout the world and to all Humanity." There were 93 signatures.

The meeting in Aryan Hall opened with music by a string quartet. Then "The Future of the Theosophical Society," from the *Key to Theosophy*, was read, and selections from the *Bhagavad-Gita* and *Letters That Have Helped Me*. After a short address by Mr. Fussell and a cello solo by Mr. Schenck, the last half hour of the old year and the first five minutes of the new were spent in meditation, the impressiveness of which could not be described. The meeting closed with the *Gayatri* and music.

THE CINCINNATI THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY held its regular public meetings on Tuesday evenings as usual. Dec. 1, Mrs. Elizabeth Burdick read an essay on "The Prison of the Soul"; Dec. 8, "Hierarchies," by Mr. Samuel Pearce; Dec. 15, "Jacob Boehme, his Life and Philosophy," a translation from the German by the Misses Kronenberg; Dec. 29, "Karma," by Miss Sophia Benkenstein, and "Cycles," by Mrs. C. M. Andrews. Good audiences were the rule. The Secret Doctrine class meets every Sunday at 3 P. M. for study.

On Dec. 6, in College Hall, H. Dharmapala lectured under the auspices of the Cincinnati T. S. on "The Reconciliation of Buddhism and Christianity"; on Dec. 7, Dharmapala lectured on "The Religion of the Future." The proceeds of these lectures, at both of which were large audiences, were sent to the Crusade Fund.

On Christmas Day the Branch served dinner in the T. S. rooms to one hundred and seventy-five men, women and children. No discrimination of any kind was made. As long as any food remained to be used just so long did members work on the streets inviting any and all to come and eat. The members first invited worthy people, then the lodging houses and the tenement houses were reached and finally the hungry people on the streets were found. This is not the general rule as to running a Brotherhood Supper, but was adopted for that day specially.

NASHVILLE T. S. has branch meetings every Sunday evening, and a study-class Wednesday evening. The Branch numbers fifteen members and has prospects of an increase soon. The meetings are interesting and well attended and the outlook for the promulgation of Theosophy in this locality is quite encouraging.

THE NEW ORLEANS THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY moved into their new rooms at 316 Baronne Street on October 1st last and with 35 members on the roll have taken up their work with more than former interest. Meetings are held every Tuesday evening at 8 o'clock for study by members and visitors, and on Sunday evenings at 8 o'clock a public lecture is given by one of the members. The Lotus Circle under Miss Helen Dunbar meets every Sunday morning at 10 o'clock.

A local Home Crusade has been organized with five sets of speakers, who will visit other organizations and deliver addresses in English, French and German. A circular letter is being prepared which will be distributed by the committee, in which is stated the object of the Crusade soon to visit our city, and the efforts of the local branch to pave the way for their advent by sharing with our fellow students the facts the Theosophists have been able to acquire.

The advance force of the Crusade is apparent among us and is evidenced by the awakened interest visitors at our meetings, and the public press, show in the movement.

Officers of the Branch are: President, Dr. C. J. Lopez; Vice President, Dr. H. A. Para; Treasurer, Karl Redwitz; Secretary, Southran R. Duval.

JAMES M. PRYSE.—Left Tampa, Fla., on December 12th by steamer to Mobile, and though Mobile was not on itinerary, had several hours to spare there waiting for the train to New Orleans, and so had the pleasure of meeting Bro. Carl Shulz, of Hot Springs Branch who is now staying in Mobile and who is an exceptionally energetic and earnest worker. Arrived at New Orleans the evening of the 14th in time to speak at the branch meeting on the regular subject on their syllabus, "The World's Teachers." Lectured before the branch on the 15th on "Psychism and Occultism"; met the E. S. T, group at their meeting on the 16th, and gave a public lecture at Odd Fellows' Hall on "Ancient Religions and Modern Theosophy" on the 17th; the audience, though not large, was intelligent and appreciative, and the *Picayune* gave an extended report of the lecture. The branch at New Orleans is in good working order, its members comprising some regular veterans in T. S. work, and they are intellectual and well posted. Arrived at Nashville, Tenn., on the 19th, lecturing the same evening on "the Real Object of the T. S." On the 20th (Sunday) met the E. S. T. group in the forenoon, and had an informal social meeting with members in their hall in the afternoon, discussing general Theosophical topics; lectured in the evening on "The Destiny of America." Arrived at Memphis on morning of 22d. Spoke at a parlor meeting at Mrs. Selden's that afternoon, held E. S. T. meeting in the evening, and lectured at branch hall, the 23d, on "The Esotericism of Christianity."

GRAND RAPIDS (Mich). Brother Harding has awakened a lively interest in this city. He came to us Nov. 19, and his stay has been one round of lectures, and E. S. T. and branch meetings. A Brotherhood Supper was held, at which nearly a hundred hungry ones were fed. A study class has been formed, and arrangements are about complete for a Lotus Circle. After Brother Harding left we found that we were twenty, instead of five. Owing to pressure of business Mr. George B. Farley has resigned the office of President and Mr. E. G. Raymond has been elected to fill the vacancy.

LOTUS CIRCLE NEWS.

ARYAN LOTUS CIRCLE gave on Dec. 27th, a Christmas tree to the two East-side Circles of 14th and Houston streets. A hall on the East-side was hired and a large tree beautifully decorated. A most interesting program was arranged and successfully carried out, including a Santa Claus, children of one Circle dressed up to represent various nations inquiring what Christmas was all about and "Theosophy" appearing in their midst to explain it, children of another circle representing the alphabet, and saying in turn, a verse for each letter, and many other pretty features. About 250 children were present for all of whom there were candy bags, oranges, etc. The occasion was much enjoyed by all.

THE WHITE LOTUS CIRCLE, 282 Houston St., N. Y., met Jan. 3d, and organized for the year with the following officers: Mr. Fred Flint, Supt.; Miss Kalish, Assist. Supt.; Mr. Peter Flint, Sec. and Treas. A New Year's greeting was sent to the Aryan L. C. and a vote of thanks for their Christmas entertainment. The White Lotus Circle is entering a new era and promises to become a strong centre for good work.

NEW LOTUS CIRCLES have been started at New Britain, Conn., and at St. Louis, Mo.

CENTRAL STATES COMMITTEE REPORT.

DURING Nov. and Dec. the Youngstown Branch has had Mr. Harding and Mr. Albert E. S. Smythe with them to lecture and work. In addition to the lectures, a Brotherhood Supper, the formation of a Lotus Circle, and a Christmas Dinner to poor children were among the most notable activities during these two months. A large number have been added to the branch membership, and they write enthusiastically of the new workers they expect to develop to aid in carrying on the work for the cause of humanity.

THE ST. LOUIS BRANCH has gone into new quarters for their Sunday meetings and a new Lotus Circle recently formed. They say that before the Crusaders return they hope to have increased their numbers greatly. Their Brotherhood Supper was a complete success.

THE MONTHLY REPORTS from Nebraska, Lincoln and Hartington, show both branches to be in active preparation for new work when Mr. Harding reaches them.

DETROIT T. S. has taken in nineteen new members since the middle of November. They think that they have also taken a new lease of life under favorable conditions for helping Theosophy to get before the public.

PACIFIC COAST ITEMS.

DR. GRIFFITHS reached Whatcom and Fair Haven, Washington, Nov. 9th, after a most successful tour of Vancouver Island and part of British Columbia. In Fair Haven, a lecture was given in T. S. Headquarters, Nov. 14th, and several branch and informal meetings were held. A local headquarters is maintained and regular meetings are held in that city.

Three lectures and two Quiz meetings were given in Whatcom. The weather was the coldest of the season, yet all meetings were largely attended. Here, also, branch and other meetings were held. Lectures were fully reported in the local press and many leaflets were distributed. The Fair Haven and Whatcom Branches had done good pioneer work, hence the public attendance and interest manifested at the lectures.

Nov. 19th to Dec. 7th was spent in Seattle, during which time five lectures and a Quiz were given. A heavy fall of wet snow, which greatly interfered with street car travel, did not prevent a large audience from attending Dr. Griffiths' first lecture of the course given there. Audiences increased with every lecture, and notwithstanding many extra seats were provided all were occupied as well as available standing room. A Quiz meeting closed the course of lectures. Ten columns of press reports were given by the city papers of these lectures, beside interviews and notices. Special provision had been made by the branch in the way of carpeting, furnishing, and otherwise improving headquarters, so that the large audiences were made very comfortable. On Thanksgiving night a reception was given the lecturer by the branch, which, beside being an enjoyable affair, was utilized by making short speeches and discussions as to T. S. work, public and private. Seattle Branch, beside its branch and Sunday meetings, has a training class and a class for beginners. On Tuesday night, Dec. 1st, a Crusade meeting was held in South Seattle presided over by Bro. F. I. Blodgett, when Dr. Griffiths gave a general lecture on Theosophy. The meeting was well attended, leaflets distributed, and quite a number later attended the course of lectures given in headquarters.

On his return trip Dr. Griffiths was delayed and spent twenty-four hours in Portland. A public lecture had been advertised, but owing to demoralization of railroads on account of storms, he failed to arrive on time. But other work was done, and while there and elsewhere urgent requests were made for his speedy return to the north coast, which it is hoped may be arranged.

EUREKA T. S. at its last monthly meeting chose the following officers to serve for the ensuing year: Mrs. Isabelle F. Mills, President; Mrs. H. A. Burnett, Vice-President; J. S. Cook, Secretary and Treasurer. We continued to make monthly visits to the Folsom State Prison. Some good work has been done there under very great opposition, but we feel confident that better times are coming, and that at the Prison, and here in Sacramento we shall very soon make better headway than we have for some time past. We visit the Prison every second Sunday in the month, riding in a vehicle of some kind drawn by horses a distance of 48 miles for the trip, quite a ride for an old man of 72 years, but I am glad I can do something for the cause of Truth. We hold Branch meetings every Monday evening free to all, at 922 9th Street, the same being the Theosophical Headquarters until we can do better, which I hope will be soon, we also have Sunday evening free meetings at the same place.

TRIANGLE T. S. (Alameda, Cal.) is actively engaged in earnest work. New names have been added to their membership roll, and a Lotus Circle is about to be organized.

SAN FRANCISCO T. S. gained several new members during December. Branch study for the month covered "The Planetary Chain," "Purpose of Life," "Septenary Man," and "Theosophy and the Past." On December 8 a Home Crusade meeting was held, addressed by seven speakers. Mrs. M. M. Thirds spoke on "The Warrior Within"; Evan Williams, "The Character of the Crusade"; Miss Anne Bryce, "The Crusaders' Special Message to Discouraged Humanity"; Dr. W. W. Gamble, "What the Crusade is Doing"; E. P. Jones, "Aids to Brotherhood"; Amos J. Johnson, "What the Crusade Has Accomplished"; Dr. J. A. Anderson, "The Necessity for the Crusade." Harry B. Monges has designed a banner for the branch, to be made of silk tapestry and containing numerous emblematic figures. Sunday lectures: Dec. 6, "Early Days of Christianity," Dr. J. A. Anderson; 13th, "Gods, Heroes and Men," Amos J. Johnson; 20th, "A New Hope," Mercie M. Thirds; 27th, "A Theosophical Idea of Duty," E. P. Jones.

Arrangements are progressing for the local Crusade which is to start in January on a tour of the towns bordering on San Francisco Bay.

NEWS FROM HOLLAND.

Here work goes on beautifully, days and weeks are all too short, and work and new schemes of work are developing in several directions. Brother Van der Zeyde has now besides his own lodge in Zaandam, his E. S. T. group there of six members and two probationers. He is to give us once a month a lecture on speaking, elocution, etc., for all those who want help in that line. Brother Hessing will also give once a month a lecture on art, architecture, painting, etc., from a Theosophical standpoint, seeking for the hints given by *old* arts and civilizations. * * *

Every Monday evening we have a meeting for visitors, where after a short address on the broad ideas of Theosophy all the old members take the leading of little groups and answer questions. It is informal and friendly and we have lots of visitors, and those who come several times nearly always end by joining us.

Wednesdays are devoted to members only for *binding work* and for the special study of Theosophy; they learn on Wednesdays what they *give out* on Mondays.

We have visitors the whole week, of course, but Saturday afternoon brings us nearly always Jews; some are very interesting people and have joined us. * * *

LETTER FROM SWEDEN.

(*Dated Stockholm, Nov. 22, 1896.*)

Please find enclosed a draft for 48 dollars, being the first month's contribution from the small Crusade-boxes of the T. S. in Europe (Sweden).

The history of this society is the following: On August 23, forty-two Swedish members sent to Col. Olcott their resignation of membership of the Scandinavian Section T. S. in order to form a branch of the T. S. in Europe.

This branch was formed in Berlin under the auspices of the Crusaders on August 27th. The charter, issued the same day by Mr. Hargrove, contained the name of twelve Swedish members, eleven of whom had met the Crusade at Dublin or Berlin, and Mrs. Katherine A. Tingley had also her name put in the charter as the thirteenth.

On Sept. 13th, the first meeting of the T. S. in Europe (Sweden) was held in Stockholm, at which it was stated that 121 members in all had joined this Society.

This day the society has Lodges in Stockholm, Helsingborg, Göteborg, Kalmar, Wenersborg, Upsala, Örebro and Hernösand and the total of its members amounts to 168.

Fraternally yours,

G. ZANDER.

NOTICE.

So many Branch secretaries have failed to send in the information asked for in the last FORUM that it will be impossible to issue a supplement this month, as promised, giving a list of the branches and their meetings and the names and addresses of their secretaries. Will the secretaries who have not already done so kindly send in this information to the editor before January 20th.

THE CRUSADE.

PURPLE PENCE REPORT.

The advent of Christmas tempting us to the expenditure of our savings for presents and merry making and the approach of the year's end bringing its accustomed influx of bills and dues of various sorts, had the natural effect of somewhat contracting the Purple Pence receipts in December, but an unusual number of letters were sent explaining the situation and assuring a fuller response next month.

Had we not become familiar of late with strange happenings and the accomplishment of apparently impossible results, it might be astonishing that the P. P. collection should have become in so short a time one of the most important of the Theosophical activities. But such is true and these monthly collections must now be relied on to furnish the financial means of completing the Crusade, which at present writing is just halfway on its journey around the world, and which but for the Purple Pence would stand in danger of being stranded and its members left in a far off land to struggle home as best they could, for the resources of those who carried the burden of expense thus far have been about exhausted.

Often has been shown how easy it is to carry out a great undertaking when a large number of people lend a hand, and let me again remind you that the greatness of *this* undertaking is not and cannot be over-appreciated. The Crusade of 1896 is to make possible the School of the Greater Mysteries in 1897. It is by means of this Crusade that the SOUL WISDOM of the whole world shall be focussed in America. America! the place from which it first went forth and to which after the completion of its *cyclic* journey it shall return, to begin another round heightened and increased, born again with enlarged glory, inspired by renewed contact with its native soil.

My friends, we are approaching the climax of our labors; we are entering upon the "home stretch," that last quarter which tries the endurance and is the real test of man or beast. Let us not weaken now, but, with determination more defined, with courage undisturbed, tranquil in heart and steady of hand, let each stand by all to the end of the race. *Send something to this centre once a month.* If you are really so poor that not even a penny a day can be spared, at least keep the little box in sight and each morning put your offering of thought upon it and the thing it stands for and if nothing more, write a letter saying that you would help if you could.

A. H. SPENCER.

THE CRUSADE IN INDIA.

The following letter is from Mrs. Cleather, dated Bombay, Oct. 31. :

"Here we are at last in the mystic East, though as yet only on the fringes of this great Indian empire. We had a beautiful passage from Aden, the heat being tempered by occasional breezes, but as a rule the sea was like glass.

"You will see by the newspaper extracts which I have sent that we have been hard at work since our arrival. Our first meeting, though well attended, was not nearly so large as it would have been had there been time to properly advertise it,—for we only learned on what day we could hire the Town-Hall on the afternoon of the day before. Everything went off very well, however, and quite a number of natives remained behind to talk with the Crusaders.

"On Tuesday last we spent one of the most interesting afternoons which I have 'ever put in.' We chartered Cook and Sons' little steam launch, and went off to see the famous caves of Elephanta. The island was quite an hour's run across the bay, the day was a perfectly beautiful one and when we got to Elephanta we were all tuned up to the right pitch. It is an ideal spot, and strongly recalled to our minds Eleusis. Nevertheless it was utterly different in character, yet something in the situation, a broad plateau overlooking the bay, something in the feel of the place, took us back to that mystic and wonderful Eleusis; and we were not far wrong, for there used to be just such mysteries enacted at Elephanta as at Eleusis, before it assumed its present character; and before the place had been hewn out into the marvellous sculptures which are now there it had been in the possession of certain mystics, and was altogether rougher than at present,—that is, not so elaborately carved but still just the same in form, hewn out of the solid rock and very grand and impressive in character.

"The time came when these original occupiers had to leave that place, but they left certain traces which those who should one day come after would be able to recognize. These traces were found. One of them was an extraordinary stone which caught our eye the moment we arrived, a piece of rock about a foot square with signs written all over it—characters so ancient that, as the custodian of the caves told us, none of the orientalists had been able to decipher them; some said one thing and some another, but no one could discover the language. Our Leader said that that stone had been purposely placed there by the original custodians of the caves, as a guide to those who might make pilgrimages from Egypt and elsewhere, as they did, to that place. The stone was found a little below the caves and in those ancient days entrance to them was concealed by brushwood and undergrowth, and the stone was placed there as a guide to those who were seeking the caves, and was inscribed in a secret cypher readable only by the initiated. Hence the puzzle of the orientalists.

"In the copy of Mrs. Tingley's speech which I enclose [printed in January *Theosophy*] you will see that she asserts that Egyptian civilization was older than Indian, and coëxisted with the ancient American civilization. This may seem to be contradicted by certain statements in the Secret Doctrine, but Mrs. Tingley said that H. P. B. had her own reasons for not giving out what she now states; she had to keep back much at the time she wrote. If however we will watch and carefully compare things we shall see that there is no real contradiction. She says that real knowledge has died out in India, and that what is left of the ancient forms and customs are but pointers which show that there once existed a real knowledge and civilization brought to the land *from the West*. What has to

be done for the Indians is to help them to understand their ancient scriptures and to get on to the right lines of thought, feeling and conduct, lines which they have lost. This will not be done by flattering their national pride and bolstering up their self-conceit.

"It is almost pathetic to see how some of the older members come to Mrs. Tingley. One in particular who knew H. P. B. and Judge and who came and offered to do any thing that lay in his power for her.

"She was very much affected on hearing the news of Lady Malcolm's death when we got our mail last night; though she was not unprepared, for on the very day on which Lady Malcolm died she told us that she felt very sad and anxious about her (four of us distinctly recall what she said), and that she had seen her with anxious and strained expression on her face as if she wanted to tell her something. Mrs. Tingley's comment on it was 'She is either dead or else has projected herself very strongly.' We made a note of it at the time as we all felt that something must be wrong, and one or two of us sat down on that very day and wrote to Lady Malcolm. This little incident is only one out of many wonderful things that I could tell you had I the time. Her intimate knowledge of all who are in any way connected with the movement always strikes us as wonderful. I mean knowledge of their present states of consciousness. She was talking to me on board ship one evening of Lady Malcolm, curiously enough, and of her enormous devotion to the Cause; and she said that she showed so much of the true spirit in that she looked not so much to outward appearances, or for words or signs or notice to be taken of her, but understood on the inside and knew that all the real work was done in silence and darkness. She had learned not to judge by appearances, by the 'outer man' or woman.

"And then Mrs. Tingley went on to say that this was expected of all the older workers. Failure on these points could be overlooked and excused in the younger workers and those who had but lately joined the movement, but that what astonished and pained her more than anything was the failure of some few of the older members—more particularly those who had known H. P. B. and been in any way under her—to respond to this inner call of the soul; and that they should persist in taking up an attitude which would be reprehensible even in a beginner. She spoke most emphatically and even solemnly, and I feel somehow that I should be lacking in my duty if I did not pass this on." . . .

In addition to the public meeting spoken of in Mrs. Cleather's letter two others were held in Bombay, and a T. S. in India was formed "on the lines originally laid down by Madame Blavatsky; at which there was naturally great rejoicing among the Crusaders."

On the morning of Tuesday, Nov. 3d, the Crusaders drove out to see the famous "Towers of Silence," escorted by a Parsee priest, and on the afternoon of the same day departed for Jeypore, where they arrived at 5 A. M. on Thursday.

AT JEYPORE.

E. T. H. says of this place in the "Screen of Time" in *Theosophy*: "Jeypore is an independent state in Rajputana. The city of Jeypore is very ancient. It is situated in a hilly district. On a hill on the outskirts of the town there is a large fort, garrisoned by Munas, aboriginal hill-men. No one is allowed to enter it on any pretext. Provisions are taken in once in two years only. The main streets of the city are crowded with Rajputs, and with Mohammedans, Jains and the four castes of Hindus. The Rajputs are a magnificent race, even in appearance; tall, powerful, dignified. The Maharajah is one of them, and is said to be most good to his people, generous, the supporter of several hospitals, schools, museums and similar institutions. He has already given the Crusaders the use of his elephants in case they wish to visit the neighboring city of Amber. It would seem that some good work may be done, and possibly some useful experiences gained, in this old city of the Rajputs." Mrs. Cleather, in a letter to the *Theosophical News*, also gives a little account of the work done in Jeypore. After speaking of it as a "very extraordinary and mystic place," she writes: "Here we could not give any lectures or hold meetings, as there are not twenty English-speaking natives in the place, but Mrs. Tingley had a special work to do here—inside work—and indeed we all had most wonderful evidence, of an occult nature, of the real meaning and source of our great Leader's work."

CRUSADE WORK IN DELHI.

Leaving Jeypore (or Jayapura, which means the city of victory) "very reluctantly" the Crusaders next visited Delhi, where splendid work was accomplished. Arriving on the 8th, a meeting was held in the Town Hall on the next day, Monday, and another on the following Thursday.

Mrs. Wright says, in a letter to the *Theosophical News*: "No sooner had we struck Delhi, and held a short preliminary public meeting to explain our position and objects, than the greatest interest sprang up among all classes. As usual, the strong sympathetic feeling expressed by our Leader, Mrs. Tingley, went straight to the hearts of the natives, and a new conception of Theosophy seemed to arise. For the next two days they simply flocked to our hotel,—Brahmins, Hindus, Mohammedans, Jains and Parsis; so that it was difficult for us to get away, even for meals. Then came the large public meeting in the Town Hall. It was crowded with natives, and the greatest enthusiasm prevailed. The speeches, which were all interpreted into the native dialect, were greeted with the most cordial appreciation.

"Mrs. Tingley had not intended to speak. When the meeting had been adjourned, not a soul moved; the audience sat as if spell-bound, and several called for remarks from Mrs. Tingley. So she spoke briefly, thanking them for their courteous reception of herself and her party, expressing her deep interest in the welfare of the Indian people, and her hope and belief that Theosophy would be able to be of some practical help to raise the people out of their unhappiness. She was enthusiastically applauded, and again the audience refused to budge.

"We were much pleased as also puzzled at this persistence; but it was explained when one of the most influential and richest natives of Delhi stepped forward and made a little speech. He thanked Mrs. Tingley with much emotion for her kindly feeling and her desire to help his people, and expressed on behalf of the people of Delhi their gratitude for the trouble in coming so far. Then he placed about her neck a garland of flowers, and a golden colored chain with a pendant symbolical of the sun, fringed with silver rays and marked with seven points.

"It was a very pretty ceremony and touched us all, and impressed us with the sense of what splendid material must exist among these people where they are so grateful for a little real sympathy of the heart. It is sad to think how much might have been accomplished in India all these years. And it is also good to remember how much can be done now to retrieve the failures of the past."

On Friday the 13th—the Crusade's lucky day—a society was formed in Delhi with a Hindu as President and a Mohammedan as Vice-President—an unusual combination in India, where the feud between the two religions is often the cause of riots. A great work will indeed be accomplished if the Hindus and the Mohammedans all over India can be brought together to work for a common cause—universal brotherhood—as they have been brought together in the Delhi Branch.

A TRIP TO LUDHIANA.

While working in Delhi for the School R. L. M. A., Mr. Pierce met Mr. Guyba Kirshan, of Ludhiana, in the Punjaub. The latter became so interested in the work of the Crusade that he begged Mrs. Tingley to go to Ludhiana, offering to entertain her and provide a hall. Lack of time made it impossible for all to go, but Mr. Wright and Mr. Patterson were sent, and the following account, taken from a letter, gives some of their experiences. It is dated Nov. 14th, 1896.

"We arrived here O. K. and are safely ensconced in the Dak Bungalo. Nothing to complain of in particular, except dust. The cobra that sleep in the chimney just beside the bed, the man here assures us does not come down at this season of the year unless a fire is lighted—but we have to be careful about cigars; and the tiger that shoved its head in at the door last night is *not* a man-eater (so the man said) but we should put Patterson's trunks against the door in future so as not to be needlessly disturbed. So you see we're quite comfortable, and if it were not for the five or six wasps' nests in the rafters, would be having a 'real good time.'

"We reached here about 11 o'clock and then immediately drove off—in a gorgeous pink and yellow painted crate on wheels, that broke down five times on the way—to make discoveries about halls, etc. The cabman took us to visit missionaries and missions of all kinds before we finally got on to the current of the Town Hall. * * * We finally reached the manager of the Hall—Mr. H. A. Rose—who said he would be quite willing to let us have the Hall if the Vice-President would permit. The V. P. turned out to be Rai B. K. Laheri and later came the permission sent to our bungalow followed shortly after by Laheri himself. We had a long talk with him and he offered his *compound* for a lecture from us, to which of course we agreed—on Monday evening, 6 o'clock. He is going to bring out all the people."

A telegram later announced that a branch of forty-three members had been organized with Mr. Kirshan as President.

A BRANCH AT LUCKNOW.

The Crusaders reached Lucknow on the 16th, and met with increased success. E. T. Hargrove in a letter dated at Lucknow, Nov. 18th, says :

"A Society formed in Lucknow this afternoon at the conclusion of the most enthusiastic public meeting yet held—57 members and so great a crush to sign applications that many are coming in the morning to add their names. Another public meeting to-morrow and more members then."

GENERAL RESULTS.

The condition of things in India seemed anything but hopeful upon the arrival of the Crusaders. The "Indian Section" T. S. founded by H. P. B., was found to have degenerated into a mere Hindu sect with practically but two active branches, and even they were simply meeting for discussion and to hear papers, and were doing no active propaganda. In fact, it was found that the society in India had proved an entire failure ever since H. P. B. gave over the direct supervision of it into other hands, and also that, with the exception of H. P. B., every prominent worker who has so far taken a hand in the Indian Society, has fallen under local influences, and become identified with some sect. This has had the effect of strengthening the hand of orthodoxy and, increasing, if anything, the existing caste and sect enmity which is the root of all India's degradation and suffering. Towards giving the people of India what they most need, "inspiration to work practically for humanity as a whole," and toward bringing together the warring sects, almost nothing has been done. Moreover the leaders of the existing society did everything in their power to hinder the work of the Crusade, and even attacked it, and its leader, in the newspapers before its arrival. This did not in the end interfere with the Crusade's work, in fact it rather helped it, but all this goes to show how sadly the previous T. S. work done in India has gone to pieces, and how great was the need for the present Crusade.

How India has responded to the present call to brotherhood, and how great a harmonizing influence the Crusade has exercised, in bringing together different creeds and sects and uniting them under a common cause, may be seen from the accounts given above. Everywhere the Crusaders met with the warmest reception and from all sides poured in invitations and offers of halls and entertainment from nearly every town of importance in India. But the work there this time is only preliminary and only a part of the great work now being done in establishing centres, and lines of force, around the globe, and so the Crusade could not stop to take advantage of the great opportunities which were presented. Mrs. Tingley gave assurances, however, that she would if possible return next year with a large number of students and at least carry further the great work begun this year, and she wishes the T. S. in America and in all other countries to join in helping India to lift its head once more and to revive its ancient spirituality which for so long has lain dormant.

A SPEEDY RETURN.

Dec. 30th. Cable received from Melbourne, Australia, states that the Crusaders will reach San Francisco on February 11th, having decided to omit China and Japan from their tour.

STONE FOR S. R. L. M. A.

The stone selected at Killarney has come to America. It is triangular shape, 2′ 6″ at base and measures 1′ 3″ to apex, rough dressed all over but one side which is smooth and inscribed with the initials: K.A.T. E.A.N. J.H.F. A.W. F.M.P. This stone when first found was pronounced by the stone cutters in Ireland to be of such hard material that it could not possibly be dressed; persevering brethren in Dublin however have overcome this difficulty and the stone is to hand at last, destined to form one of the triangles, four of which will constitute the corner stone of the S.R.L.M.A., a stone from Holland, from Sweden—the latter most beautifully dressed and inscribed,—also one from Paris, and one from Greece, have all come to hand.

The land for the school will be bought during this month and a temporary building erected, also the foundation prepared so as to be ready by the time of the return of the Crusaders, for the dedication ceremonies, and the laying of the corner stone.